GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission estimates the incidence of poverty at national and state level from the large sample survey data on consumer expenditure obtained from the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). These surveys are conducted at an interval of approximately five years. The latest estimates of poverty are available for the year 1993-94 estimated from the large survey consumer expenditure data of the 50th Round of the NSSO. Comparing two latest estimates, 1987-88 and 1993-94, it is observed that the percentage of people living below the poverty line in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh has increased from 16.28 per cent in 1987-88 to 30.34 per cent in 1993-94. However, this is less than the percentage of people living below the poverty line in 1977-78, which was 33.49 per cent in rural areas. The estimates of poverty are not available separately for hilly and backward areas of the state.

(c) There is a three-pronged action to alleviate and reduce the poverty in the country. These are: (i) acceleration of economic growth, (ii) human, and social development through literacy, education, health, nutrition, meeting of the minimum needs, elevation of social and economic status of the weaker sections of the society, etc., and (iii) direct attack on poverty through employment and income generating programmes and assets-building for the poor.

Economic Development of Hilly and Tribal areas of NER

4238. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any proposal to introduce schemes for economic development of hilly and tribal areas in the North East Region;

(b) whether any such scheme has been sponsored by Government in recent past; and

(c) if so, the details of such schemes in the hilly and tribal areas of North East, more particularly in Assam indicating the coverage made during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC

GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) To ensure speedy economic development in the North Eastern Region, including the hilly and tribal areas in the region, a large number of projects, included in the PM's Packages and Shukla Commission Recommendations, have been completed/taken up for implementation. Further, the following policy initiatives have also been taken to augment the resource base of the North-Eastern States:—

(i) 30% of Normal Central Assistance is ear-marked for Special Category States which include N.E. States.

(ii) 90% of Plan assistance is grant and 10% loan as against 30% grant and 70% loan for other States.

(iii) State contribution of 15%, which is mandatory for the Basic Minimum Services schemes, is not applicable to N.E. States.

(iv) 10% of Plan provision of the Central Ministries/Deptts. has been ear marked for development of N.E. States.

(v) Over and above the State Plan outlays which have been increasing over the years, funds are also being sanctioned out of the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources created through transfer of unspent balance of the ear marked outlays of the Central Ministries and Departments meant for development of the N.E. States.

(vi) The north Eastern Council is also engaged in the development of infrastructure in the region.

(vii) Special dispensation has been made in respect of the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) by incorporating minor irrigation projects for the North-Eastern States and allowing 25% of the State's share, as against 33% for others, in availing of Central Loan Assistance.

(viii) Diversion to the extent of 20% of the Normal Central Assistance (Plan) is allowed for Non-Plan purposes.

(ix) Special Central Assistance is allocated for addressing the special problems of the border areas under the Border Area Development Programme (BADP).

(c) In addition to the initiatives listed above, Special Central Assistance is allocated to the hill areas of Assam namely, North Cachhar District and Karbi

Anglong District under the Hill Areas Development Programme. The allocation during Annual Plan 1997-98 was Rs. 46.32 crores, in 1998-99 it was Rs. 50.16 crores while in 1999-2000 Rs. 50.90 crores were allocated.

As per the recommendations of the Committee to administer the Non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources which became operational in 1998-99, the following projects/schemes have been supported for Central Assistance during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 from the non-lapsable central pool of resources for the State of Assam including projects/schemes in the hilly and tribal areas of Assam :

Projects/Schemes Supported for Central Assistance During 1998-99 and 1999-2000

Project Description		Funds released (Rs. crore) 1998-1999	1999-2000
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	Srimanta Sankardev Kalashtra Project	4.85	—
2.	Diguncherra to Airport Road	0.25	—
3.	220 KV/DC Kathalguri-Tinsukia Line (30 KMs)	2.00	—
4.	Namrup Sub-Station 2 × 50 MVA, 220/132 KV	2.50	—
5.	Tinsukia Sub-Station 2 × 50 MVA, 220/132 KV	3.00	—
6.	Minor Irrigation Schemes	11.21	5.00
7.	Flood Control management scheme different locations of Brahmaputra and Barak Valley (25 Nos.)	5.00	5.00
8.	Upgradation of Guwahati Medical College	—	8.00
9.	Project to bridge the infrastructure gaps in Forestry Sector (including Preparation of Working Plans)	—	10.00

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
10.	Road Schemes for N.C. Hill Autonomous Council, Haflong.	—	5.00
11.	Installation of One Lakh Shallow Tube Wells	—	11.00
12.	Creation of new infrastructure at Cotton College	—	3.00
13.	Sankaradev Netralaya	—	1.00
14.	I.I.T., Guwahati	—	64.00
15.	Tezpur University	—	10.00
16.	Assam University	—	10.00
17.	Diphu Campus of Assam University	—	3.00
18.	Centre for Plasma Physics, Guwahati.	—	1.51

Efforts to Speed Up Developmental Activities in North-Eastern Region

4239. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that even after allocation of 10 per cent of the budget of all the Departments and Ministries for the development of the North-Eastern Region, there is no concrete development in the region;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government will take rejuvenated efforts to speed up all round developmental activities in the region; and

(d) whether Government will take steps to increase the Central assistance to make an impact in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC